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**Permanent Commission on the Status of Women**

*The State's leading force for women's equality*

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**Testimony of  
Permanent Commission on the Status of Women  
Submitted to the  
Housing Committee  
February 23, 2016**

**Re: S.B. 156 AN ACT CONCERNING THE DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

Senators Winfield and Hwang and Representatives Butler and Kupchick, and distinguished members of the Housing Committee, thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on behalf of the Permanent Commission on the Status of Women (PCSW) in support of S.B. 156, An Act Concerning the Data Collection and Analysis of Affordable Housing.

In Connecticut, 78.5% of single-parent families statewide are headed by women and for some of our state's lowest income families, more than 30% of their income is spent on housing.<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately, the areas with the highest concentration of affordable housing in Connecticut are correspondingly the areas with the lowest average income, the lowest economic opportunity, the worst education performance, and areas characterized as food deserts that have some of the poorest health.

When it comes to availability of affordable housing and ensuring that housing is available in high opportunity areas, there is little to no information available. In order to improve opportunity for Connecticut residents and ensure that dollars spent on affordable housing are done so effectively, the state must collect essential data. S.B. 156, An Act Concerning the Data Collection and Analysis of Affordable Housing seeks to do just that.

Currently, there is no comprehensive list of subsidized housing in the state, which means that it is difficult to know where housing is located and which funding streams are being used to pay for it. Additionally, in order to understand the current and future housing needs of our state, Connecticut must gather demographic information such as race and ethnicity, age, family composition, disability status, and income of the household. It is imperative that Connecticut improve the transparency of housing data so that we can have a clearer sense of housing needs, a single list of subsidized units, annual fair housing goals, an analysis of progress, and an assessment of affirmative marketing efficacy.

Thank you for your consideration of this important issue.

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<sup>1</sup> Impediments to Fair Housing Choice, United States Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2015.